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ABSTRACT

A study explored the group mapping activity, a process that encourages each reader to construct a visual schema or map following the reading of a story. It also sought to determine if there is a developmental sequence in eighth grade and college students' mapping and if these representations provided new insights into how readers process language. Subjects were 26 eighth grade students and 30 college sophomores, all of whom participated in their respective language arts classes. After a story was presented to them by means of the directed reading thinking activity, students completed a written retelling of the story and then mapped their perceptions of the selection. Results indicated that both groups drew essentially the same percentage of interactive, identification, and linear maps, but they differed considerably in the ways they distributed the internal elements (character relationships, symbolic awareness, sequence of events, and ancillary characters) and the character/thematic components (protagonists, protagonist shift, theme, protagonist and theme, and protagonist shift and theme) among the three map classifications. These results seem to support the idea that the college students were at a higher developmental level. (JL)

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The Mapping of Literary Elements by Eighth Graders and College Sophomores Following the Reading of a Narrative

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Semantic mapping (Pearson and Johnson 1978), semantic webbing (Freedman and Reynolds 1980), and story grammar (Whaley 1981) are processes that have been advanced for organizing and integrating information to facilitate readers' comprehension and recall of stories. Through these procedures students are guided to classify the components of a story and specify the relationship among the parts.

While the preceding visual displays and/or diagrammatic methods have been used in group reading instruction to help children integrate and synthesize concepts for meaning, few suggestions have been advanced for having readers utilize similar procedures to retrieve what they have stored in their heads. One retrieval approach, the Group Mapping Activity (Davidson and Triplett 1980), is a process which encourages each reader to construct a visual schema or map following the reading of a story.

Once each reader has completed an independent, spontaneous map or graphic representation of the story, it is evaluated for a series of attributes which are most often portrayed by readers in response to good literature. This study describes the Group Mapping Activity, and it suggests how the maps or schemata represent categories and relationships that are constructed from the story content and from the child's own knowledge and "theories about the world" (Smith 1975). The study also seeks to determine if there is a developmental, or progressive, sequence in eighth graders' and college students' mappings and if these graphic representations provide new insights into how readers process language.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to compare the results of group mapping activities for a college sophomore class with those from an eighth grade public school class to determine the extent each group mapped similar or different literary elements after reading the same selection. The study focused on those literary features which were found to be represented most often in the maps of students studied earlier by the writer (Davidson and Triplett, 1980.)

Prior studies had shown that both college and junior high school students independently produced graphic representations with similar literary features, but only when the readers had demonstrated sufficient recall of the story in their written retellings. The present study seeks to determine whether specific literary features are represented more by one group than the other when the individuals involved appear to have no difficulty recalling information from a story that has well-defined characters and a clearly developed theme. Such information may provide insights into the developmental nature of readers' acquisition of literary features they choose to include in their pictorial representations of the stories they read.

The first research question of the study was: Which of the following three map classifications predominate in each group's maps?

1. Interactive - the map shows a major emphasis on interactions between and relationships among characters in the passage.
2. Identification - the map shows a major emphasis on one character in the passage.
3. Linear - the map shows a major emphasis on the sequence of events in the passage.

The second research question was: Which of the following four internal elements predominate in each of the three map classifications (Interactive, Identification, Linear) for each group?

1. Character Relationships - internal elements indicate relationships between and among characters in the passage.
2. Symbolic Awareness - internal elements indicate symbolism or abstract awareness.
3. Sequence of Events - internal elements show events in the order they occurred in the passage.
4. Ancillary Characters - internal elements identify those who play subordinate roles in the passage.

The third research question was: Which of the following five character and thematic features predominate in the three map classifications (Interactive, Identification, Linear) for each group of students?

1. Protagonist - the main character in the story.
2. Protagonist Shift - a character other than the main character.
3. Theme - the central message of the story.
4. Protagonist and Theme - the main character and the central message.
5. Protagonist Shift and Theme - a character other than the main character and the central message of the story.

The fourth research question was: Among the three Map Classifications, does their appear to be a developmental trend in the distribution of the four Internal Elements or the five Character and/or Thematic Components as represented in the maps of a group of 8th grade students as compared with the maps of a group of college sophomores?

Methodology

Subjects who participated in the study were 26 eighth grade public school students and 30 college sophomores, all of whom participated in their respective

language arts classes. A science-fiction story "The Most Beautiful Music" by Nancy Mackenroth was presented to the participants by means of the Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (Stauffer, 1969), following which the students completed a written retelling of the story and then mapped their perceptions of the selection.

The Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DR-TA) is a group problem-solving procedure in which the teacher facilitates the readers' thinking by regulating the amount of material to be read and by asking questions which stimulate their examination of available clues and declaration of purposes for reading. In literature, purposes for reading are stated as predictions or expectations for the development of the story and final outcome. Purposes differ for individual readers, depending on their background of experiences, the experiences of the group, and the content of the material. Stauffer has stated, "Purposes for reading represent the key element in versatility" (1969, p. 24). He has also stated that where readers have "become involved in the dynamics of a purpose-setting session, the self-commitment on an intellectual as well as emotional level has tremendous motivating force" (1969, p. 25).

During the DR-TA, the readers skim, scan, and study as they read in order to satisfy their purposes. They check on individual and group purposes as they read and either keep their original predictions or redefine them. Thereby, concepts in the passage may be further developed. Moreover, the group discussion in which predictions are confirmed, discarded, or redefined insure that subjects participating in the study have shared understanding of the passage.

Squires (1964) found that readers experienced difficulties interpreting literary passages when they (1) failed to grasp the implications of details,

or (2) made incorrect inferences, or (3) failed to defer final judgment until they related to details presented later in a story. He identified the need for reachers to obtain all information before making final assessments. The DR-TA was considered the best method to accommodate the weaknesses he noted because the teacher is able to guide the readers' interpretation of passages and to help insure that they are comprehending what they read. In addition, the DR-TA appears to be an effective method for use with varying age groups.

The final step of the DR-TA usually involves discussion, further reading, additional study, and writing in order to increase power of observation, reflection by abstraction, judgment, and reasoning. In this study, the Group Mapping Activity was used as the final step to the DR-TA. As such, readers were instructed to map their perceptions of the passage, using symbols, pictures, lines, labels, short phrases, and the like.

Results

The findings for the 8th grade and college sophomore students are sumarized in tables and discussed under each research question.

1. Which of the three map classifications (Table 1) -- Interactive, Identification, or Linear -- predominate in each group's maps?

Analyses of map classifications for the two groups revealed that 8th graders' and college sophomores' major schema or pictorial representations were very much alike. Identification patterns were mapped most frequently by both groups; the 8th graders did so 65 percent of the time, and the college sophomores 70 percent. Thus, the majority of the maps showed a major emphasis on one character in the passage.

The next highest map classification was of the Linear type. Twenty percent of both groups drew maps that showed a major emphasis on the sequence

of events in the passage.

Interactive maps were drawn least often by both groups. Fifteen percent of the 8th graders and ten percent of the college sophomores drew maps that showed a major emphasis on interactions between and relationships among characters in the passage.

Table 1

Number and Percent of Maps Classified as Interactive, Identification, or Linear for Grade 8 Students and College Sophomores

Map Classification	Grade 8 (N-26) Number	Percent	College Sophomores (N-30) Number	Percent
Interactive	4	15	3	10
Identification	17	65	21	70
Linear	5	20	6	20

2. Which of the following four internal elements--Character Relationships, Symbolic Awareness, Sequence of Events, or Ancillary Characters (Table 2) -- predominate in each of the three map classifications (Interactive, Identification, and Linear) for each group?

Character Relationships were the most frequently portrayed internal elements in the 56 maps; 8th graders drew them 48 percent of the time, and college sophomores 44 percent. Character relationships were shown most often in Identification maps. Identification maps contained 66 percent of all the Character Relationship elements for college students and 45 percent of the same elements for eighth graders. Eighth graders Interactive maps also contained 45 percent Character Relationships while the sophomores contained only 13 percent. In Linear maps Character Relationships were represented 10 percent of the time by eighth graders and 71 percent by college sophomores.

Table 2

Analysis of Internal Elements in the Literary Maps of a Group of 26 Eighth Graders and a Group of 30 College Sophomores

	Map Classifications								
8=Grade 8 C=College R=Rank	INTER-ACTIVE		IDENTI-FICATION		LINEAR				
Internal Elements=Percent	8	C	8	C	8	C	Total Percent 8	C	R
Character Relationships	45%	13%	45%	66%	10%	21%	48%	44%	1
Symbolic Awareness	58%	0%	29%	88%	12%	12%	37%	44%	2
Sequence of Events	14%	0%	28%	33%	57%	66%	15%	11%	3
Ancillary Characters	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	1%	4
Total Percent & Rank — Gr. 8	46% (1)		37% (2)		17% (3)				
College Sophomores		5% (3)		73% (1)		22% (2)			

Symbolic Awareness was the second most frequently portrayed internal element in the 56 maps. Of all of the Symbolic Awareness elements drawn, 88 percent of the college students' elements and 29 percent of the 9th graders' elements were represented in Identification maps. In Interactive maps eighth graders drew 58 percent Symbolic Awareness and college sophomores drew none. Both groups drew 12 percent Symbolic Awareness in Linear maps.

Sequence of Events was the third most frequently portrayed internal element in the three map classifications. Of all of the Sequence of Events drawn, 66 percent of the college students' elements and 57 percent of the 8th graders' elements were represented in Linear maps. Identification maps contained 28 percent Sequence of Events elements for 8th graders and 33 percent for the college sophomores. Interactive maps showed Sequence of Events in 14 percent of the eighth graders maps but in none of the college students' maps.

Ancillary Characters were represented only once; this was in a college student's Identification map.

3. Which of the following five characters and/or thematic features (Table 3) -- Protagonist, Protagonist Shift, Theme, Protagonist and Theme, and Protagonist Shift and Theme -- predominate in the three map classifications (Interactive, Identification, Linear) for each group of students?

The Protagonist was the most identified feature in the 56 maps; the 8th graders drew one 65 percent of the time, and the college sophomores 24 percent. The Protagonist was drawn in Identification maps 31 percent by 8th graders, and 7 percent by sophomores; in Linear, 19 percent by 8th graders and 10 percent by sophomores; in Interactive, 15 percent of 8th graders and 7 percent of sophomores.

The Theme was the second most frequently represented element; it, too, was shown most often in Identification maps. The Theme was shown in Identification maps almost twice as often by the college sophomores (40 percent) as it was by the 8th graders (23 percent). Eighth graders did not draw the Theme in either Interactive or Linear maps. College sophomores drew the Theme once each in Interactive and Linear maps.

The combined Protagonist and Theme were represented third most often; like the preceding two elements, these were also shown most often in Identifica-

Table 3

Analysis of Character and/or Thematic Features in the Literary Maps of a Group of 26 Eighth Graders and a Group of 30 College Sophomores

8=Grade 8 C=College Soph. R=Rank	Map Classification: INTER-ACTIVE		IDENTI-FICATION		LINEAR		Percents Rounded Up			
Character and/or Thematic Features	8	C	8	C	8	C	Total Percent 8	R	C	R
Protagonist	15%	7%	31%	7%	19%	10%	65%	1	24%	2.5
Protagonist Shift	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	5
Theme	-	3%	23%	39%	-	3%	23%	2	46%	1
Protagonist and Theme	-	-	8%	17%	-	7%	8%	3	24%	2.5
Protagonist Shift & Theme	-	-	4%	7%	-	-	4%	4	7%	4

Total Percent & Rank	Gr. 8	15% (3)	66% (1)	19% (2)
	College Sophomores	10% (3)	70% (1)	20% (2)

tion maps: 17 percent by college sophomores and 8 percent by 8th graders. Neither group of students drew the Protagonist and Theme together in Interactive maps, and only two college students (7 percent) drew Linear maps.

Protagonist Shift by itself was not shown in the maps of either group.

4. Among the three Map Classifications, does their appear to be a developmental trend in the distribution of the four Internal Elements (Table 2) or the five Character and/or Thematic Components (Table 3) as represented in the maps of a group of 8th grade students as compared with the maps of a group of college sophomores?

The distribution of total Internal Elements among the three Map Classifications (Table 2) reveals different rankings for each group of students. Eighth graders placed 46 percent of Internal Elements in Interactive, 37 percent in Identification, and 17 percent in Linear. College students placed 73 percent of their Internal Elements in Identification, 22 percent in Linear, adn 5 percent in Interactive. Comparisons of the data for the rankings of the two groups reveal that 8th graders drew nine times as many Internal Elements in Interactive maps as did college students, but college sophomores drew twice as many Internal Elements in Identification maps as did 8th graders. College students drew 5 percent more Internal Elements in Linear maps (22%) than did 8th graders (17%); this classification showed the least difference between the two groups.

The distribution of all Character and/or Thematic Features among the three Map Classifications (Table 3) shows different rankings by the eighth graders and college students. Eighth graders ranked Character and/or Thematic Features in this order: (1) Protagonist-65 percent, (2) Theme-23 percent, (3) Protagonist and Theme-8 percent, (4) Protagonist Shift and Theme-4 percent, (5) Protagonist Shift-0 percent. College sophomores ranked the same features in the following order: (1) Theme-46 percent, (2.5) Protagonist-24 percent, (2.5) Protagnoist and Theme-24 percent, (4) Protagonist Shift and Theme-7 percent, (5) Protagonist Shift-0 percent. Comparisons of the data for the rankings by the two groups show that the eighth graders' drew almost three times as many Protagonist features as did college sophomores. College sophomores, however, drew twice as many Theme features and three times as many Protagonist/Theme features as did 8th graders. Neither group showed a Protagonist Shift for this story.

DISCUSSION

The research questions discussed herein provide some insights into 8th graders' and college sophomores' spontaneous, independent mappings of a story for which they had already demonstrated sufficient recall through written retellings. Although each group of students drew essentially the same percent of maps in each of the three classifications--Interactive, Identification, and Linear, they differed considerably in the ways they distributed the four Internal Elements and the five Character/Thematic Components among the three map classifications. The question arises as to whether these differences may be associated with progressive developmental levels of literary response. Several investigators--McCreesh (1970), Goldman (1965), Peel (1959), Case and Collinson (1962), and Applebee (1978)--suggest that reader's responses to stories involve developmental levels of thought that attend experience and age.

Applebee (1978) using Piaget's (1926) age-related operational stages of thinking as a way of organizing his findings, observed that the acquisition of formal operational thought appears to have its influence in two stages of literary response. In stage I (ages 12-15) children's response is formulated as analysis of the structure of the story or the motives of the characters. During this stage their analyses often cause them to empathize with one or more characters or to see correspondence between their own lives and what is happening in the story. In stage II (ages 16-adult), which represents the most mature mode of response, readers begin to generalize about the meaning of the work, considering its theme or point of view. At this level individuals begin to focus on how they have gained or not gained through the work; thus, they consider the story's effect on their own lives.

Many of the mapping responses of the 8th graders (ages 12-13) and the

college sophomores (18 years to adult) in this study appear to parallel, respectively, Applebee's formal operational stages I and II. For example, the total percent of Internal Elements for each of the three map classifications (See Table 2) shows that 8th graders drew the most elements (46 percent) in Interactive maps, but college students drew the least elements (5 percent) in Interactive maps. The opposite conditions are noted in Identification maps; here college students drew 73 percent of their internal elements, while the 8th graders drew half as many (37 percent).

The same trend is noted in the distribution of Symbolic Awareness elements among the three map classifications. In Interactive maps the 8th graders drew 58 percent Symbolic Awareness elements; the college students drew none. But in Identifications maps, the college students drew 88 percent Symbolic Awareness elements; the 8th graders drew only 46 percent.

How is it possible to account for the fact that although both groups of students drew far more Identification maps than Interactive maps, each group placed more of their Internal elements in one type of map than the other? The explanation is inherent in the fact that each student could draw up to four different internal elements in a map. In so doing, the eighth graders, as a group, tended to identify with one character and portray more Internal elements--Character Relationships, Symbolic Awareness, and Sequence of Events--in Interactive maps. And although the group of college students also identified one character most often, they drew a greater number of Internal elements in Identification maps.

Is there an explanation for the differences just noted? One observation is that younger students acknowledge a variety of aspects of story involving the Protagonist (See Table 3) rather than the Theme. The college students,

however, projected the Protagonist into more aspects of Theme. This older age group showed a total of 76 percent protrayals of Theme, Protagonist and Theme, and Protagonist Shift and Theme, but the 8th graders drew these same components only 35 percent of the time. Eighth graders drew the Protagonist more often (65 percent) in all three map classifications than did the college students who did so only 24 percent of the time.

The preceding data suggest that 8th graders were at a developmental level that parallels Applebee's stage I, since they, as a group, most often showed the interrelationships of characters with the protagonist. By contrast, the group of college students appeared to have progressed to stage II in Applebee's model, as they focused more often on the Protagonist and/or the Thematic components in their maps.

Linear maps, the tendency to show a major emphasis on the sequence of events in the passage, were drawn less often than Interactive or Identification maps by both groups of students. Sequence of Events elements were also drawn less often by each group of students than were Character Relationships or Symbolic Awareness. Again, these observations appear consistent with Applebee's finding that for readers ages 6 to 17 there was a general movement away from simple retelling and summarizing of a story to an awareness of a variety of aspects of a story.

The present study explored the Group Mapping Activity with two different age groups, each responding to the same science fiction story. While the use of this one story may be viewed as a limitation restricting generalizability, the findings are consistent with an increasing body of research on how children respond to literature. The value of the Group Mapping Activity may be that it represents one of the most spontaneous and elaborative means of retrieving information from the readers' interaction with text. Since even primary grade

readers and listeners respond graphically to literature they read and hear, replication of the present study with a population representing each grade level in school would broaden its generalizability.

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